

Tacoma TRADEWINDS

Tide turns toward TOTE at Anchorage

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—TOTE's move from Seattle to Tacoma has helped the trailer-ship firm increase its foothold in the lucrative trade between Puget Sound country and this bustling city on Alaska's Cook Inlet.

That was the word from Anchorage-based officials of Totem Ocean Trailer Express (TOTE) during a nine-hour layover of the trailership Great Land.

These people should know what they're talking about. They're on the firing line, dealing daily with customers receiving just about everything from perishable foods and household goods to badly needed construction supplies and equipment.

A delay of a few hours on one sailing can cost TOTE getting some of this cargo for the next sailings. That's why faster ship loadings in Tacoma, even though that city is more than an hour's steaming time south of Seattle, are helping turn the tide toward TOTE in Alaska.

And helping TOTE's two trailerships run with the tide. A few hours' delay getting out of Puget Sound can delay by a full day the delivery of goods at Anchorage due to those tidal restrictions here.

"EVERYONE UP HERE is sure pleased with the performance in Tacoma," said Howard Acton, vice president of TOTE's Alaska operations. It was a losing battle to keep the Great Land on schedule when she was working out of Seattle, he said. "People just don't realize how important it is to maintain our schedule. If we get behind, there's no way of catching up," except by missing a week's sailing entirely, Acton said. And missing just one sailing costs TOTE a half-million dollars.

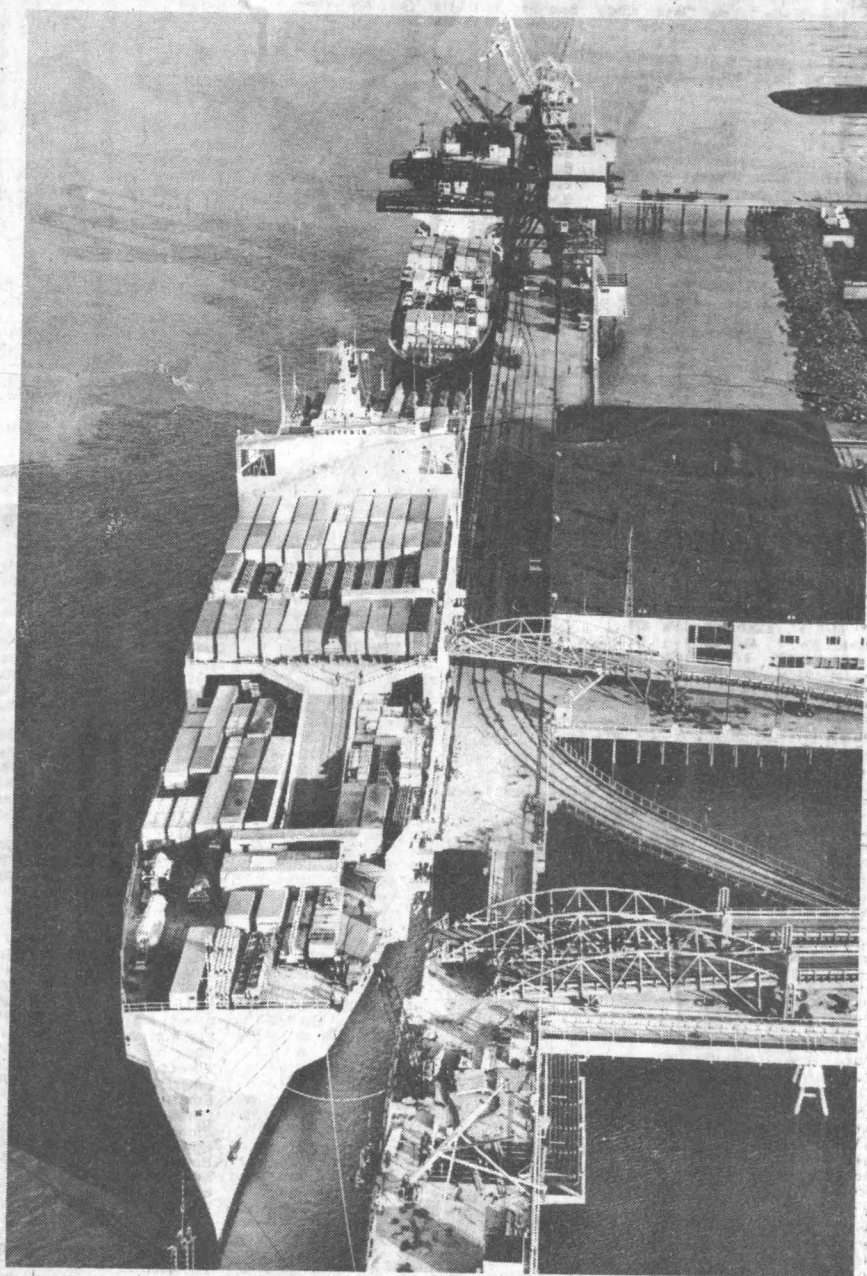
Acton, no relation to TOTE President William Acton, in Seattle, is a refugee of competitor Sea-Land Service. He held down Sea-Land's fort at Kodiak before TOTE arrived on the Anchorage scene late last summer.

With the Great Land sailing nearly fully loaded each week and the sister ship El Taino, on the run for one month, already sailing nearly half full, "TOTE has really impacted Alaska," Acton said.

"The people here were plain ripe for TOTE coming in. I think we've got a better mousetrap" than the competition, he added.

Those other mousetraps include competitor Sea-Land's container ships out of Seattle, a rail barge service from Seattle to the rail head at Seward and, of course, hauling trailers overland on the Alaska Highway.

THE COMING OF TOTE was welcomed by the city-operated Port of Anchorage. Although TOTE has si-



Great Land, Sea-Land ship at Anchorage

phoned some cargo from Sea-Land, most of the goods on the trailerships would have bypassed the port here, either by being transported by truck or barge and rail.

Port Director William McKinney thinks "our tonnage this year will increase at least 70 per cent due to TOTE coming here."

TOTE's arrival, however, has caused some berthing headaches for McKinney. The battle between TOTE and Sea-Land isn't as intense as last fall but occasional skirmishes still occur. "We regret" the competitive atmosphere that exists between the two companies, McKinney said diplomatically. "But I think they're beginning to realize both of them are here to stay and they'd better get along with each other."

Whether that happens remains to be seen. TOTE is just beginning to introduce some newly built refrigerated

trailers to its service. The obvious aim is to capture more of the perishable food business and that is a Sea-Land mainstay right now.

ABOUT A HUNDRED longshoremen work the TOTE, Sea-Land and other ships calling at the Port of Anchorage. Not all of those dock workers are men.

In the ranks is 26-year-old Patty Stewart, who recently has become a steady tractor driver, rolling those trailers off and on the TOTE ships.

The petite, pony-tailed longshorewoman who hails from California has a biology degree from a California university.

She worked as a laboratory technician for the California state health department but "there was no challenge to it," she said during a brief trailer-loading break. "And I don't like being cooped up indoors."

Officials still optimistic for port expansion

By ANDY WILLIAMS
Daily News Staff Writer

Despite rejection by city voters and the governor, Port of Anchorage officials are still hopeful they can get the funds to expand port facilities.

Port Director Bill McKinney said Tuesday he hopes to persuade the municipal administration to place the \$5.4 million bond issue rejected by the voters last April back on the ballot in October.

AND GOV. Jay S. Hammond said he would recommend general fund appropriations for priority projects in the \$30.5 million bond proposal for ports and harbors he vetoed after the legislative session. The bond proposal contained about \$3.5 million for a Port of Anchorage expansion.

McKinney said both the municipal bond issue and matching funds from the state or federal government were needed for the port expansion. "Without a federal grant or a state grant, we would have a serious problem even with the G.O. (general obligation) bonds," he said.

The proposed expansion would add 179 feet to terminal 3. McKinney said the expansion would allow a tanker and ships from Sea-Land and Totem Ocean Trailer Express to dock at the port at the same time.

McKINNEY SAID the port now can handle a Sea-Land ship, a Tote ship and a tanker simultaneously only if Sea-Land docks at Terminal 1, a tanker docks at the petroleum dock and Tote docks at Terminals 2 and 3.

If a Sea-Land ship comes in first and docks at Terminal 2, which it prefers to use, the Tote ship must use the

petroleum dock. McKinney said this leaves no place for tankers to tie up.

McKinney said the port cannot give preferential docking rights to any ships but that the Federal Maritime Commission is expected soon to allow the port to give preferential scheduling to Tote at Terminal 1 and the petroleum dock and to Sea-Land at Terminal 2. Without the expansion, a Tote ship or tanker could not tie up while the other was in the port, he said.

McKINNEY SAID a \$4 million construction project to be completed in September would extend Terminal 3 to 540 feet and allow room for one more dry-cargo ship to dock when Sea-Land and a tanker were in. But it wouldn't change the situation regarding Tote, he said.

The port director said the 790-foot-long Tote ships can carry over-sized containers that can be rolled on and off. Sea-Land ships, which average 523 feet long, can only carry cargo that can be fitted on 35 or 40-foot containers. Without Tote, over-sized containers must be offloaded at Seward or Whittier and brought to Anchorage by train, he said.

McKinney said the port has handled 318 vessels this year. Sea-Land has three or four ships a week. Tote has two arrivals, and there are usually about 15 tankers a month, he said.

If voters approve the general obligation bonds in October and the state or federal government comes through with matching funds, he said construction could begin on schedule next summer.

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Sunday, May 2, 1976, Anchorage Times

Between Us

By Robert B. Atwood



WE CAN ALL be proud this week of the longshoremen who work on the Anchorage dock. They are being cited as an inspiring example for longshoremen elsewhere, particularly in Seattle.

Tote, the people who run the world's largest trailer ships, the Great Land and a sister ship Western Adventure, that starts service next month, are telling the Seattle longshoremen that they are too slow. If they don't speed up in handling the ships, the company will relocate its terminal in Tacoma.

Proof that the Seattle longshoremen are too slow is the fact that the Anchorage longshoremen unload the huge trailerships in one tide — 10 to 12 hours. This enables the ship to leave on the first tide after arrival. In Seattle the longshoremen do their work in 24 to 30 hours — two or three tides.

THE ANCHORAGE longshoremen have won first honors for speed long before this. In fact, they made the local dock famous in 1961 when the first coastwise ship arrived here with cargo to be unloaded.

The Anchorage Times brought that ship here under charter from Vancouver, B.C. It brought a shipload of newsprint. The Times chartered the ship in order to prove that the dock was usable. The Alaska Steamship Line had refused to bring a ship to it.

That hassle involved the monopoly that was held by the Alaska Railroad and the Alaska Line. The railroad made a deal to take the freight from the ships at Seward and pull it over two mountain passes at great expense to get it to Anchorage.

The Anchorage dock was a threat to that railroad traffic. It took something special to break up the cozy arrangement.

THAT SHIP caused problems for everybody, except the Anchorage Times. The paper company in San Francisco decided that Anchorage didn't know how to run a dock, so it sent its best traffic man here to supervise the unloading.

The people who ran the dock for the city didn't know how to handle a ship. It was a new experience to have a Norwegian freighter the M.S. Trollegen, approach and want to be tied up. The San Francisco expert had to coach the local dock operators on bookkeeping, rate schedules and all that.

But the longshoremen knew exactly what to do and they did it. They unloaded that newsprint faster than any crew anywhere on the West Coast had done before. They won first honors for tons-per-hour and speedy turnaround for that ship.

This was deliberate. They knew

that if they didn't do well it would be unlikely that they would get work in the future.

THE TRAFFIC EXPERT from San Francisco sang the praises of the operation in Anchorage. This port gained immediate fame along the entire West Coast because of what the longshoremen did with that shipload of newsprint.

When the Anchorage Times needed another shipload of paper, about a year later, it chartered another line to bring it here. Again, the operation was a success due to the enthusiasm and verve of those longshoremen.

After that, charters were unnecessary. The Alaska Line published tariffs and started regular operations to the Anchorage dock. The big deal with the railroad had been broken and the dock began to collect its first revenues.

The dock has been expanded several times from its original structure, and further expansion is needed now. Even though it has required some tax support, it has paid off many times.

THE EARTHQUAKE in 1964 wrecked all the major docks in western Alaska, except at Anchorage.

Had the people of Anchorage not built the local dock with their tax credit, Fairbanks, as well as Valdez, Seward and the rest of the western Alaska population, including Anchorage, would have been left dependent upon airlines for supplies.

The problems of the trailership operators can be solved, they say, by relocating the southern terminus at Tacoma where the longshoremen indicate they will do a speedy job like the Anchorage crews.

Tacoma ought to be interested because the work involves 350 shifts per week.

The Tote line people say that in Seattle the union assigns drivers for their hustler trucks who don't know how to drive them. Some can't even start the engine without guidance. They fumble around and don't know how to take the trailers on and off the ship.

But in Anchorage, the union assigns trained men who handle the trucks like a bookkeeper handles a lead pencil.

Isn't it grand to have Anchorage an example of something that is good? The public gets the benefits from efficiencies in shipping. Anchorage is blessed by having longshoremen who do well for the people they serve here.

Robert B. Atwood is editor and publisher of the Anchorage Times and a 40-year reporter on the Alaska scene.

Sea-Land Ship Hits Barge Tied At Dock

By ANN GABLER
Times Staff Writer

A Sea-Land freighter weighing about 100,000 tons hit a barge tied to a dock at the Port of Anchorage yesterday slightly damaging the barge, its pipe-piling load, the dock and a port tug.

The 532-foot SS Newark out of Seattle, "came in nice and gently, hit the barge, broke the line and shoved it (the barge) into the tug," a witness said.

The impact caused a hole 10 inches long and one-quarter inch wide in the barge's middle seam, said Bill Urban, manager of the municipality's dock construction project.

The hole was repaired in a few hours but at least five pipe pilings on the barge were damaged, he said. Since the pipes are pounded into the ground in sequence, construction will be delayed until the damaged pipes are replaced, Urban said.

Port director Bill McKinney said damage to the dock was relatively minor. "We've had more damage done by normal docking."

Two of the dock's fender pilings —

wooden poles hung from the dock — were damaged, according to McKinney. He estimated damage to each pole at a few hundred dollars as one pole was already damaged and both had been in use for some time.

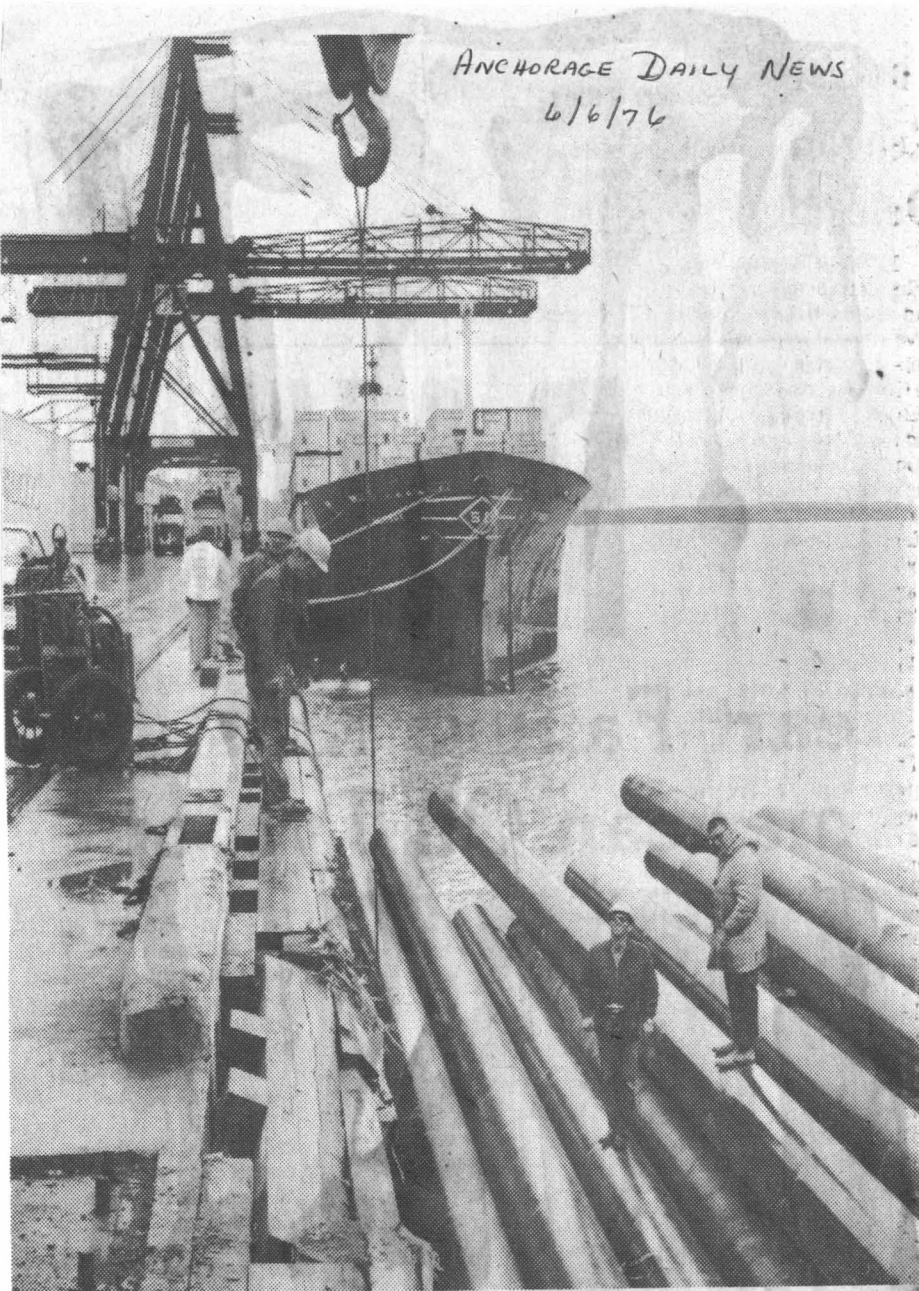
The tug, Knik Wind, owned by Cook Inlet Tug and Barge, had several windows broken when the barge's pilings hit the boat, said mate Carl Anderson.

Urban said that about 30 minutes prior to the accident, two men were on the barge loading pipe pilings from a crane on the dock. The barge was waiting to be towed a couple hundred feet to the construction area when the Newark nudged it with its bow.

A spokesman for the U.S. Coast Guard said it will investigate the accident and submit a report to its district office in Juneau.

Sea-Land Service Inc. refused to comment on the incident.

Capt. Gerard Robinson of Homer was pilot of the ship, which was carrying 366 loaded freight vans.



WORKERS INSPECT EQUIPMENT DAMAGES

Dock construction workers inspect the barge and pipe pilings which were damaged yesterday when the freighter SS Newark, background, hit the barge while docking at the Port of Anchorage. The impact

caused a 10-inch long hole in the barge which was repaired in a few hours. The ship, carrying 366 loaded freight vans, weighed about 100,000 tons.